Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services
Special Education Advisory Committee – Joint SESAC and SECAC Meeting
Thursday, October 16, 2014

Participants:
   Members: Kelly Meissner, Rhonda Creecy, Mary Baskar, Rachel London, Marlo Lemon,
        April Edwards, Kathy Kaufman,
   Staff: Donna Riley, Karla Marty
   Excused: Dorie Flynn, Martha Goodman, Lori Hall-Underwood, Yvonne Hu-Cotto, Dawn Koplos,
        Donna Riccobono, Denise Stamp, Carol Strootman, Sarah Wayland
   Guests: Dolly McMahon, Elizabeth (Twig) Anthony, Ann Scholz, PJ Shafer, Katherine Simon,
        Pamela Talley, Barbara Wink, Gretchen Rockafelow, Leanne Carmona, Jessica Chapman,
        Joseph Cormier, Jeff Gladhill,

Handouts
Agenda
SESAC By-Laws
SESAC – one pager
SECAC TAB (Technical Assistance Bulletin)
Reflection Tools

Welcome/Introductions
Kelly Meissner greeted the participants and initiated introductions.

Reflective Tools
Karla Marty provided participants with copies of two reflection tools in draft form. The two documents
are titled *Components of High-Quality, Functional Routines-Based IFSPs: A Reflection Tool* and
Components of High-Quality, Standards-Based IEPs Reflection Tool. Karla explained that the tool is not
intended to evaluate teacher practice, rather to help to identify and target technical assistance.
Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) intends to use the tools in part for Professional
Development. The tools will be introduced at the Professional Learning Institute in November. Karla
asked the group to provide feedback on the tools. She noted that this draft had not been revised since
the last round of input because they wanted input from this group before making additional changes.
Kelly asked that all comments be sent to her by October 30 so that she can compile and send to MSDE.

Role of the SESAC
Kelly led a conversation with participants about the role of the SESAC, including the mission, bylaws, and
membership requirements. There was discussion of how the SESAC and SECAC could more closely
communicate. Also participants talked about the participation and attendance challenges for both
groups. Maryland Learning Links was identified as a possible forum for the groups to use.

Kelly asked the SECAC participants to reflect and share "what's working, what's not." She called on
Elizabeth (Twig) Anthony and Dolly from Caroline County to talk first. They shared some of the
technology and materials they are using. They also noted attendance at meetings has improved since
they started having guest speakers. They are also working to engage parents more in the conversation.
They have a Discovery Day highlighting services and products for children birth to five year old in May

each year that includes vendors, day care, service providers, etc. It is very popular. They also vary the location of SECAC meetings to engage people on both the north side and south side of the county.

Joe Cormier from Charles County talked about how they had invited candidates for school board to talk to the SECAC not as a venue for campaigning, rather as an information experience for the candidates, many of whom did not know what SECAC is. He also talked about a conference they have that is a partnership among Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary's.

Gretchen Rockafelow – Carroll County noted that about 2 years ago they had the same low attendance problem that Elizabeth and Dolly noted. They moved their meetings to day time rather than evening. They also have speakers, as well as group talk. They have an awards night where educators are nominated by parents and that has been very successful.

Jeff Gladhill from Washington County, also noted difficulty with membership and attendance and currently county staff run the SECAC.

PJ Shaffer– Baltimore County said they put letters in students' book bags with the meeting schedule for the year. They structure their meetings as half input session and half topical. Also, each PTA has a special education liaison. The June meeting of the SECAC is reserved as a planning meeting each year. The Executive Committee also provides a report to the Board of Education each month. Also, DHR has partnered with the city courts to address education issues.

Ann Scholz – Howard County noted that they do a fair job of getting families to the big meetings. The SECAC executive committee meets once a month with the Special Education Director. They also have an annual Recognition Night that gets a lot of participation. SECAC uses this to promote inclusive principals

Leanne Carmona- Arundel County said they hold a resource night and use email lists. They have a new special education director and hosted a "meet the new director" event.

Julie Reiley – Montgomery County noted that they have a time at each meeting for parents to testify or provide input.

There was some discussion of what role does SECAC have to advocate. This lead to a discussion of the need for having formalized bylaws that spellout the roles of SECAC members.

Background of the SSIP and Initial Data Review and Analysis

Donna Riley reviewed the SSIP Phases and purpose of stakeholder input. She talked about the activities the MSDE has conducted for initial data review and analysis and presented those analyses, including additional data requested by various stakeholder groups. She noted that on October 10 there was a stakeholder meeting at which some of those attending this meeting had provided input.

During her presentation she reminded participants of areas of emphasis in current state initiatives including the Maryland State Department of Education Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services Strategic Plan (early childhood, professional learning, access, equity, and progress, and secondary transition), the State Professional Development Plan (SPDG) (closing the math gap using tenets of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), evidence-based math practices, and parent engagement), and the Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT). Donna also reviewed three of Maryland's reform initiatives – Race to the Top (RTTT), Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, and the

ESEA Flexibility Waiver. She then showed data related to the composition of the population of students with disabilities, including types of disabilities, race/ethnicity, and free and reduced meals. She also presented data on the placement in which students are receiving special education and related services, including these distributions by race/ethnicity. The next set of slides related to student proficiency on the statewide assessment, showing data related to proficiency levels by disability category, grade level, as well as gap analysis between students with and without disabilities.

Whole Group
Jane Nell Luster asked Kelly and Jeff to share with the group some of the discussion and suggestions that resulted from the October 10 stakeholder meeting. She then asked for input from the group on areas of emphasis for the Maryland State Department of Education. The most frequently noted area was post-school outcomes. It was pointed out, however, that measuring post-school outcomes in the manner currently used by the State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report may not be truly reflective of what occurs after students exit school. It was also noted that preparation for post-school life may not be as rigorous or as tied to post-school needs as would be most useful for successful post-school outcomes. Early Learning/Early Learners was another area noted to be important in continuing school success. Gap reduction was identified by some group members. Gap reduction and post-school outcomes were noted to be tied together and leading to a conundrum of where to start to get better results for children with disabilities. PARC assessments and understanding of the test were also identified. There was discussion of how professional development is necessary to ensure educators have the skills necessary to differentiate instruction and implement evidence-based instructional strategies.

Jane Nell noted that MSDE is taking all input and will be synthesizing to identify a general state-identified measurable result (SiMR) that will be share with stakeholders. From that general SiMR, MSDE will review infrastructure and possibly additional data to identify a specific SiMR using many of the strategies identified in this meeting and that of October 10.

Jane Nell noted she would prepare a summary of the 10/16/2014 meeting.

The next SESAC meeting is Tuesday, November 18, 2014 at JHU/CTE.

Submitted October 28, 2014
Jane Nell Luster, Ph.D.